



NEWS

RELEASE

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Contact: Nancy Singer (202) 205-6740

Internet Address: www.sba.gov/news/

SBA AWARD WINNING WEB SITE REACHING 9.5 MILLION HITS A WEEK

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Web site reached an all-time record number of customers with 9.5 million hits a week, SBA Administrator Aida Alvarez announced today.

“Providing ready access to information is one of the most important services this agency can offer small businesses,” **said Administrator Alvarez.** “The SBA Web site is customer-focused and is an example of outstanding service delivery. Its quality, recognized time and time again, clearly indicates that the agency is at the forefront of technological change.”

Recently, *Forbes* magazine listed the SBA Web site in its *Best of the Web* issue. Since it was launched in 1994, the Web site has won 14 prestigious awards.

By offering a wide range of products and services, the SBA Web site at www.sba.gov has been an important resource for small businesses needing help to start or grow a small business.

For startup help, the site answers frequently asked questions, outlines the critical first steps, and offers a wealth of research tools.

Small businesses can find business opportunities through several databases located on SBA’s Web site. They can find government contracting opportunities through *PRO-Net*, subcontracting opportunities through *SUB-Net*, and venture capital opportunities through *ACE-Net*. *Trade Mission Online* and *TradeNet* offer information on international trade and export assistance. *Tech-Net* is designed for technology-based businesses.

From the SBA Web site, small businesses can learn about financing opportunities and SBA loan programs, receive counseling and technical assistance, and take an online course from the *SBA Classroom*.

The online reading room contains updated laws and regulations affecting small businesses, directories, publications, and program and other useful information. It is one of the most popular areas of the Web site.

SBA's district offices and local resources are easily accessible from the SBA Web site. These include the locations of Business Information Centers (BICs), Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), Women's Business Centers (WBCs), and One-Stop Capital Shops (OSCS), U.S. Export Assistance Centers (USEACs), and Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) chapters.

Additional information about SBA's programs and services is available at SBA's Web site: <http://www.sba.gov> or by calling the SBA's Answer Desk at 1-800 U ASK SBA.

List of SBA Web Site Awards



Forbes Best of the Web - Year 2000: Listed as one of the “red tape cutters” helping to navigate the “muddy waters” of government bureaucracy: “Great information on loads of free government resources and links that most entrepreneurs forget about, from listings of SBA branch development centers to grants and services available for women entrepreneurs.”



Building Caring Communities Web Excellence Award – April 2000: “A well designed site is defined as not making any of the critical top 10 mistakes in web design...[and] must also be devoted to the building of caring communities...”



Web Feet Seal of Approval: “Congratulations! Your Web site has received the *Web Feet* seal of approval and will appear in *Web Feet*, the Internet traveler's desk reference.”



GovExec's Best Feds Award: “In *GovExec.com*'s third annual *Best Feds on the Web* competition, contestants showed that a pretty face and great links are no longer enough to qualify as a top federal Web site. Technological know-how and customer service are what really count.”



GovSpot Spotlight Award: “GovSpot simplifies the search for the best government Web sites...”



Links2Go Award: “*Links2Go* Key Resource award is based on an analysis of millions of web pages. During the course of our analysis, we identify which links are most representative of each of the thousands of topics in *Links2Go*, based on how actual page authors index and organize links on their pages.”

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Eagle Award for Excellence on the Net!: "A must for small businesses."



Starting Page Top 2000: "The goal of Starting Page is to be a highly selective guide to the Best of the Web, and not to be an all inclusive directory. We **only** wish to feature those sites that are truly the Best of the Web."



Lycos Top 5%: "...save yourself a trip to the local office by dropping by the SBA's solid Website. In the Online Library, you'll find details on the often-confusing array of loan programs available to the rookie entrepreneur along with the text of significant laws and regulations affecting small business."



Awarded Virtuocity Select Site: "Best Site for Small Businesses."



Microsoft's Hand Picked Award: Microsoft *Best of Business Webs* '97 & '98



Windows Magazine's 101 Best Business Sites: "No matter what stage your business is at, you'll find a wealth of information...Get step-by-step information on launching a business, find out about SBA loan programs, take an online course or register your business in Pro-Net for government contracting opportunities."



Yahoo!'s Best Sites of '98 Award: "...has a Startup Kit with a walk-through of each step on the road to running your own show, from forming the initial business plan to finding the money you need in order to realize your dream. The information is presented with an eye to the legal and financial concerns...every would-be entrepreneur should be aware."



Forbes Favorite Web Sites September 1999: "A treasure trove of valuable leads and resources for investors and entrepreneurs....A great site for anyone looking to start, expand or finance a business...Clever online startup kit for new small business owners, as well as shareware for every topic covered..."